UNITED
NATIONS

CRC

Convention on the
Rights of the Child

Distr.
GENERAL

CRC/C/15/Add.127
9 August 2000

Original: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Twenty-fourth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

KYRGYZSTAN

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Kyrgyzstan (CRC/C/41/Add.6) at its 627th and 628th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.627-628), held on 23 May 2000, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee notes that the State party report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines for reporting, and covered almost all the provisions. Moreover, the quality of the report is reflected in the comprehensive information provided, and its self-criticism. The Committee appreciates the informative and detailed responses to the list of issues, and the presence of a high-level delegation which contributed to an open and frank dialogue.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the 1998 Law on the Protection of Minors' Rights, and the adoption of numerous legislative and administrative measures related to the rights of children, which demonstrate the commitment of the State party towards its obligations under the Convention.

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* At the 641st meeting, held on 2 June 2000.

4. The Committee notes that the State party has ratified the six major international human rights instruments, and maintains a timely record of report submission to the treaty bodies.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

5. The Committee notes that the State party has had to face serious economic, social and political challenges during the past few years posed by the transition to a market economy, including increased unemployment and poverty, which has had a severe impact, especially on the most vulnerable segments of society.

D. Principal subjects of concern and Committee recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Coordination, budgetary allocation and cooperation with civil society

6. Noting that the State party has adopted various legislative and administrative measures relating to children's rights, the Committee is concerned that the implementation of these measures is impeded by several factors, namely deficiencies in coordination, budgetary allocation and resources, and the involvement of civil society.

7. Despite the existence of several governmental committees which deal with children's issues, such as the State Commission for Family, Women's and Youth Affairs, and the Commission for Minors, there remains a lack of administrative coordination and cooperation at the national and local government levels.

8. **While appreciating that decentralization of services allows local authorities to respond better to local needs, the Committee emphasizes that the State party is responsible for ensuring that resources reach the most vulnerable groups. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a comprehensive national plan of action to implement the Convention, and give attention to intersectoral coordination and cooperation at and between national and local levels of government. The Committee recommends that the State party provide adequate support to local authorities, including development of professional capacity, for implementation of the Convention.**

9. The Committee is concerned that insufficient attention has been paid to article 4 of the Convention regarding the implementation to the "maximum extent of … available resources" of economic, social and cultural rights of children.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop ways to establish a systematic assessment of the impact of budgetary allocations on the implementation of children's rights, and collect and disseminate information in this regard. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the adequate distribution of resources at the national and local levels and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation.**

11. Noting the State party's efforts to involve civil society in the preparation of the report, the Committee is concerned that insufficient efforts have been made to involve civil society in the implementation of the Convention.

12. **Recognizing that the process of transition has led to the dismantling of many public social regulators, the Committee emphasizes the important role civil society plays as a partner in implementing the provisions of the Convention, including with respect to civil rights and freedoms, ill-treatment, and juvenile justice. The Committee recommends that the State party consider a systematic approach to involve civil society, especially children's associations and advocacy groups, throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention, including policy-making. In this regard, the Committee recommends that greater efforts be made to involve relevant State actors, such as local government officials and the police, in the dialogue with civil society; and further encourages the State party to support initiatives aimed at strengthening the role of civil society and to equip State actors with the knowledge and skills essential for working in partnership with local institutions.**

Independent/monitoring structures

13. The Committee is concerned that disaggregated data of persons under 18 years relating to the rights contained in the Convention is not used effectively because of an absence of a mechanism to analyse them.

14. **The Committee recommends that the State party establish a mechanism to systematically analyse disaggregated data and use this information as a basis to assess progress and design policies to implement the Convention. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from UNICEF, among others, in this regard.**

15. The Committee emphasizes the importance of setting up an independent mechanism with the mandate to monitor regularly and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels.

16. **The Committee encourages the State party to establish a statutory body with an independent membership and adequate resources with the mandate to monitor regularly and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention and to receive and deal with complaints of violations of child rights.**

Training/dissemination of the Convention

17. Although the Convention is binding and has the force of law, the Committee is concerned that it has not been invoked in the courts because of insufficient awareness of the Convention amongst the judiciary, lawyers, and the general public, including children. While noting efforts in this regard, the Committee nevertheless is concerned that the State party is not undertaking adequate dissemination and awareness-raising activities in a systematic and targeted manner.

18. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop an ongoing programme for the dissemination of information regarding the implementation of the Convention among children and parents, civil society, and all sectors and levels of government. The**

Committee encourages the State party to pursue efforts to promote children's rights education in the country, including initiatives to reach the most vulnerable groups. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to develop systematic and ongoing training programmes on the provisions of the Convention for all professional groups working with children (e.g. judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, local government officials, personnel working in institutions and places of detention for children, teachers, health personnel, including psychologists, and social workers). The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from, among others, OHCHR and UNICEF, in this regard.

2. Definition of the child

19. Notwithstanding the definition of a minor as a person under 18 under the Law on the Protection of Minors' Rights, the Committee is concerned with inconsistencies of this definition with other legislation and government decisions (e.g. Decisions No. 263 of 2 May 1997 and No. 150 of 8 April 1996 in relation to assistance paid to families of disabled children up to the age of 16 years), and the inadequate enforcement of minimum-age standards (i.e. with respect to early marriage, purchase of alcohol, etc.).

20. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that legislation or policy relevant to persons under 18 is consistent with the definition contained in the Law on the Protection of Minors' Rights and make greater efforts to enforce minimum-age requirements.**

3. General principles

Non-discrimination

21. The Committee is concerned at the prevailing disparities in the enjoyment of the rights of children in Kyrgyzstan. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the situation of children living in institutions; in regions of the country which are lagging behind in socio-economic development; and of children of rural and poor families. The Committee is concerned that the guarantee of non-discrimination in article 2 of the Convention may be jeopardized, for example by the 1998 social security law which effectively deprived all non-citizens of rights to social security benefits, except for education fee discounts for families with many children and/or of low income; and the practice whereby non-citizens are subject to higher fees demanded by health practitioners.

22. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2. The Committee recommends that the State party prioritize and target social services for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups.**

23. The Committee is concerned that in practice the system of residence registration in Kyrgyzstan may restrict the rights of children belonging to vulnerable groups (e.g. refugees, non-citizens, migrants and persons internally displaced owing to conflict, economic factors, or

environmental disasters) to access to health care and other social services. In particular, the Committee is concerned at reports that at the local level, officials are sometimes reluctant to see migrants settle in their jurisdiction and do not observe regulations concerning temporary residence registration. Moreover, the Committee is concerned that individuals without appropriate documentation for residing in Bishkek risk relocation to another part of the country.

24. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the registration system does not pose a barrier to access to services, particularly for the most vulnerable groups. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the experience of States that have replaced the *propiska* system with systems which correspond better to international standards in the area of freedom of movement.**

25. Like the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (A/54/38), the Committee is concerned that de facto discrimination on the grounds of gender persists and expresses its concern at the persistence of stereotypical attitudes relating to roles and responsibilities of women and men.

26. **The Committee encourages the State party to launch comprehensive public education campaigns to prevent and combat gender discrimination, particularly within the family.**

Respect for the views of the child

27. In light of article 12 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned that respect for the views of the child remains limited owing to traditional societal attitudes towards children in schools, care institutions, the justice system, and especially within the family.

28. **The Committee encourages the State party to promote and facilitate, within the family, the school, care institutions, and the justice system, respect for the views of children, and their participation in all matters affecting them, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party develop skills-training programmes in community settings for teachers, social workers and local officials to assist them to help children to express their informed decisions and to take these views into consideration.**

4. Civil rights and freedoms

Birth registration

29. Given that failure of timely registration of the birth of children can have negative consequences on the full enjoyment of their fundamental rights and freedoms, the Committee is concerned that many parents in rural areas, particularly internal migrants, fail to register their children owing to a lack of knowledge that it is necessary, lack of access to registration facilities, lack of documentation, and inability to pay registration fees.

30. **In light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party make greater efforts to ensure free and timely registration of all births and take**

measures as regards training and awareness-raising of registration in rural areas. The Committee encourages steps such as the establishment of mobile registration offices and registration units in schools and health facilities.

31. The Committee is concerned that persons under 18 are restricted in their freedom of association.

32. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that any restrictions that are imposed comply strictly with limitations that are in accordance with article 15, paragraph 2, of the Convention and are "imposed in conformity with the law and ... are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others".**

Protection from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

33. The Committee is concerned at numerous and continuing reports of ill-treatment of persons under 18 by the militia, including psychological intimidation, corporal punishment, torture and abduction. The Committee is concerned that victims of such treatment are largely from vulnerable groups, such as refugees; that children are often detained for payment from their families; and that fear of reprisals and inadequate complaints procedures discourage children and their parents from filing complaints. Like the Committee against Torture (CAT/C/23/6), the Committee expresses concern at the absence of a definition of torture in the 1998 Criminal Code and appropriate penalties, and the apparent failure to provide prompt, impartial and full investigation into allegations of torture, as well as the failure to prosecute alleged perpetrators.

34. **In light of article 37 of the Convention, and recalling the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials (General Assembly resolution 34/169), the State party should take all necessary and effective steps to prevent incidents of ill-treatment from occurring. The Committee recommends that the State party implement the recommendations made by the Committee against Torture (CAT/C/23/6); provide the militia with training on how to deal with persons under 18; ensure that persons are adequately informed of their rights when they are detained; ensure that complaints procedures are simplified so that responses are appropriate, timely, child-friendly and sensitive to victims; and provide rehabilitative support to victims.**

5. Family environment and alternative care

Children deprived of a family environment

35. The Committee is concerned about the large number of children, especially children with disabilities who are abandoned or are otherwise deprived of a family environment. Further, it is concerned that foster care or other forms of family-based alternative care are not sufficiently developed and available; that as a result children are placed in institutions which, owing to a lack of resources, provide children with very low-quality housing and care; and that the location and features of institutions do not facilitate family contact. The Committee is concerned at the absence of effective mechanisms for children to communicate concerns and complaints about

their placement. In light of article 25 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned at the inadequate system to review placement, monitoring, or follow-up of the situation of children in institutions.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures, including the development of strategies and awareness-raising activities, to reduce and prevent the abandonment of children. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party promote the family as the best environment for the child through counselling and community-based programmes to assist parents to keep children at home. Moreover, it is recommended that the State party take all effective measures to increase and strengthen foster care, family-type foster homes and other family-based alternative care, and place children in institutions only as a last resort. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a comprehensive review of conditions in institutions; take all necessary measures to improve infrastructure; and ensure that children living in institutions enjoy all the rights laid down in the Convention, in accordance with article 2. The Committee recommends that the State party review existing policies and practices to ensure that children in institutions can maintain links with their families. The Committee recommends that the State party provide support and training for personnel in institutions, including social workers. The Committee recommends that the State party establish effective mechanisms to receive and address complaints from children in care, monitor standards of care, and establish regular periodic review of placement.**

Adoption

37. Noting the increase in national adoption and long-term foster placements, the Committee is concerned about the absence of national standards, particularly in relation to foster and adoptive family screening. Moreover, the Committee is concerned at the absence of mechanisms to review, monitor and follow up adoptions, and of statistics on foster care and adoption. The Committee is also concerned about the practice of secret adoptions.

38. **The Committee recommends that the State party establish a comprehensive national policy and guidelines governing foster care and adoption, including screening, and a central monitoring mechanism in this regard. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that adopted children who have reached the age of majority have the right of access to the identity of their biological parents, in accordance with Kyrgyz custom. The Committee recommends that when the State party envisages lifting its suspension on intercountry adoptions, it accede to the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.**

Violence/abuse/neglect/maltreatment

39. The Committee is concerned, as the report acknowledges, that ill-treatment of children takes place in the family, institutions and schools. The Committee is concerned that violence against women is on the rise and is a problem in Kyrgyzstan, and that this has harmful consequences on children.

40. **In light of articles 19 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that all forms of physical and mental violence, including corporal punishment and sexual abuse against children in the family, schools and care institutions, are prohibited. The Committee recommends that these measures be accompanied by public education campaigns about the negative consequences of ill-treatment of children. The Committee recommends that the State party promote positive, non-violent forms of discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment, especially in the home and schools. Programmes for the rehabilitation and reintegration of abused children need to be strengthened. Moreover, adequate procedures and mechanisms need to be established to receive complaints; monitor, investigate and prosecute instances of ill-treatment; and ensure that the abused child is not victimized in legal proceedings. As regards violence against girls and women, the Committee recommends that the State party implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (A/54/38). Attention should be given to addressing and overcoming socio-cultural barriers that inhibit victims from seeking assistance. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF and WHO.**

6. Basic health and welfare

Children with disabilities

41. The Committee is concerned at the prevailing poor situation of children with disabilities. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the practice of institutionalizing children with disabilities, and that access to services such as rehabilitation and education are limited and severely strained.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party review existing policies and practice in relation to children with disabilities, taking due regard of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and of the Committee's recommendations adopted on its day of general discussion on children with disabilities (CRC/C/69), and ensure that they enjoy all the rights contained in the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party provide early childhood care and special education for children with disabilities; develop entry-grade detection capacity within the primary school system; and provide services for children with learning disabilities and behavioural disorders. The Committee recommends that the State party make greater efforts to implement alternatives to the institutionalization of children with disabilities, including community-based rehabilitation programmes and reunification of children with their parents. Awareness campaigns which focus on prevention, inclusive education, family care and the promotion of the rights of children with disabilities need to be undertaken. Adequate support, supervision and training should be given to persons working with these children. The Committee encourages the State party to seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO and relevant NGOs.**

Right to health and health services

43. Noting efforts to strengthen the primary health sector, the Committee is nevertheless concerned by the deterioration in the health of the most vulnerable groups, especially women and children. In particular, the Committee notes the increase in the incidence of communicable diseases, including vaccine-preventable diseases, and in childhood malnutrition. Moreover, the Committee is concerned that because of distant facilities and insufficient numbers of personnel and medication, children in rural regions suffer most.

44. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that its commitment to primary health care, including implementation of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses strategy, is met by adequate allocation of resources, both human and financial, and that all children, especially from the most vulnerable groups, have access to health care. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake awareness-raising campaigns to ensure that families, especially refugee families, are adequately informed of the need to be registered in polyclinics. The Committee recommends that the State party establish comprehensive family planning programmes, as well as measures to ensure that abortion is not perceived as a method of contraception. The State party is encouraged to continue cooperation with and seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF and WHO.**

45. With regard to adolescent health, the Committee is concerned at the high and increasing rate of teenage pregnancies and the consequently high rate of abortions among girls under 18. The Committee notes that various factors, including limited availability of contraceptives, poor reproductive health education and the requirement of parental consent have resulted in an increasing number of illegal abortions among girls. The Committee is concerned with the rise in rates of STDs, particularly syphilis, and the spread of HIV/AIDs.

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a comprehensive study to understand the nature and extent of adolescent health problems, with the full participation of adolescents, and use this as a basis to formulate adolescent health policies and programmes. While recognizing that parents play an important role in this regard, cultural attitudes and lack of knowledge and communication skills by parents may be barriers to accurate reproductive health information and counselling. In this regard, the Committee recommends that adolescents have access to and be provided with reproductive health education and child-friendly counselling and rehabilitation services. The State party is encouraged to continue cooperation with and seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF and WHO.**

47. In light of article 24 of the Convention, the Committee expresses its concern at problems involving the recycling, collection and disposal of waste in urban areas and poor access to safe water and adequate sanitation in rural areas, which negatively impact upon the health of children. Moreover, the Committee is concerned at the inadequate measures taken to protect the health of children from the negative impact of dangerous environmental hazards resulting from inappropriate storage of, *inter alia*, radioactive and toxic wastes.

48. **In light of article 24 (c) of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including international cooperation, to prevent**

and combat the damaging effects of environmental degradation on children, including pollution and contamination of water supplies. The Committee encourages the State party to collect data on access to clean water and sanitation.

Right to an adequate standard of living

49. The Committee notes that one of the many consequences of economic transition, is deterioration in the family environment, leading to an increase in homeless children in the streets and markets of Bishkek and other cities. The Committee expresses its concern about the situation of children living and/or working on the streets, who are amongst the most marginalized groups of children in Kyrgyzstan.

50. **The Committee recommends that the State party establish mechanisms to ensure that these children are provided with identity documents, food, clothing and shelter. Moreover, the State party should ensure these children have access to health care; rehabilitation services for physical, sexual, and substance abuse; services for reconciliation with their families; comprehensive education, including vocational and life-skills training; and legal aid. The State party should cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society in this regard. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF.**

7. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Right and aims of education

51. The Committee is concerned at the deterioration in the quality of education, especially infrastructure, teaching and curricula. The Committee is concerned at declining pre-school enrolment and the persistence of high drop-out, repetition and absenteeism rates in primary and secondary schools.

52. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to allocate the required resources, both human and financial, to implement effectively the Education for All programme. The Committee recommends that the State party take due regard of the aims of education laid down in article 29, and consider introducing human rights, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, into the school curricula, including at the primary level. The Committee recommends that the State party promote the importance of early childhood care and development programmes, especially among low-income households, and stimulate informal community schemes in this regard. The Committee recommends that the State party promote the participation of parents and communities, especially ethnic minorities, in school governance to improve enrolment rates and monitor the quality of education. The Committee encourages the State party to seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF, UNESCO and relevant NGOs.**

8. Special measures of protection

Asylum-seeking and refugee children

53. The Committee is concerned at the situation of refugee and asylum-seeking children in Kyrgyzstan. The Committee is concerned that the existing system of refugee status determination is inefficient, and subject to substantial delays. Moreover, eligibility criteria, such as the three-day deadline for filing refugee status claims, and the safe third country rule, as applied, may arbitrarily deny de facto refugee children protection to which they are entitled to under the Convention and relevant international refugee instruments. The Committee is concerned that the issue of documentation is a serious problem for non-nationals, especially asylum-seekers. The Committee notes that refugee documentation is provided only to the head of household, and that this causes problems for "undocumented" children when encountering the militia who constantly harass these children and subject them to fines and detention. The Committee notes, for example, the difficult situation of rejected refugee claimants who are denied refugee documentation yet whose illegal residence is tolerated, most notably Afghans.

54. **The Committee recommends that the State party review its asylum determination policy and ensure that it complies with international standards. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake effective public education campaigns to inform asylum-seekers, especially those newly arrived, about asylum procedures and the importance of children having documentation; provide practical assistance in obtaining birth certificates for every child and adequate procedures for the replacement of lost identity and travel documentation; and establish a system allowing refugee and asylum-seeking children to have their own documentation. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the payment of fines for non-possession of documentation should be made only to a court or officials not involved in the citation; issuance of receipts be mandatory; and those detained not be required to pay the costs of their detention. The Committee encourages the State party to continue and expand its cooperation with international agencies such as UNHCR and UNICEF.**

Economic exploitation

55. The Committee is concerned that the negative effects of the current economic crisis have resulted in an increasing number of children dropping out of school and taking up work. The Committee expresses its concern at children working in the informal sector, especially children from rural backgrounds who may be at special risk, many of whom are working in hazardous conditions. In particular, the Committee is concerned that children involved in tobacco and cotton harvesting often receive no training on safety precautions when working with toxic pesticides and herbicides. There is also concern about child labour in mines in the south.

56. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the minimum age for admission to employment is enforced. Employers should be required to have and produce on demand proof of age of all children working on their premises. A national mechanism to monitor the implementation of standards at State and local levels should be established, and empowered to receive and deal with complaints of violations. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a national survey on the nature and extent of**

child labour. The Committee recommends that the State party carry out campaigns to inform and sensitize the general public, especially parents and children, of work hazards. It is also recommended that the State party ratify the ILO Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182). The State party should seek assistance from, among others, ILO.

Drug abuse

57. The Committee is concerned about the increasing use of and traffic in illicit drugs, alcohol abuse, and the alarming rates of tobacco use among persons under 18 years.

58. **The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a national survey on the nature and extent of substance abuse. With the full participation of adolescents, including in its implementation and evaluation, the Committee recommends that the State party develop a national drug control plan, or a master plan, with the guidance of the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). The Committee encourages the State party to provide children with accurate and objective information about substance use, including tobacco use, and protect children from harmful misinformation through comprehensive restrictions on tobacco advertising. The Committee further recommends that the State party develop rehabilitation services for children who are victims of substance abuse. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from WHO and UNICEF.**

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

59. Like the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (A/54/38), the Committee is concerned at the increase in prostitution and the trafficking of girls and women and the absence of an effective, comprehensive and integrated approach to prevent and combat these phenomena. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient data and awareness of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Kyrgyzstan.

60. **The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a national study on the nature and extent of commercial sexual exploitation of children, and that disaggregated data be compiled and kept up to date to serve as a basis for designing measures and evaluating progress. The Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation and ensure that it criminalizes the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and penalizes all offenders, whether national or foreign, while ensuring that the child victims are not penalized. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that domestic laws concerning the sexual exploitation of children be gender neutral; provide civil remedies in the event of violations; ensure that procedures are simplified so that responses are appropriate, timely, child-friendly and sensitive to victims; include provisions to protect from discrimination and reprisals those who expose violations; and vigorously pursue enforcement. Rehabilitation programmes and shelters should be established for child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. There is a need to adequately train personnel working with child victims. The Committee recommends that the State party carry out awareness-raising campaigns to sensitize and mobilize the general public on the child's**

right to physical and mental integrity and safety from sexual exploitation. Bilateral and regional cooperation should be reinforced, which involves cooperation with neighbouring countries.

Administration of juvenile justice

61. The Committee is concerned that juvenile offenders are not dealt with separately under the justice system; and that there are no special procedures or specially trained personnel. Despite laws to the contrary, the Committee is concerned that the militia often do not notify parents of arrests, and that often neither parents nor lawyers are present during questioning of juveniles. In relation to pre-trial detention, the Committee expresses its concern at the length of detention; the limited access to visitors; and that juveniles are often detained with adults during this period. The Committee is concerned at the limited access to adequate legal aid for poor individuals; the often disproportionate length of sentences meted out in relation to the seriousness of offences; and that girls are detained with adult females. The Committee is concerned at the poor conditions of the facilities; inadequate nutrition, clothing and psychological and medical care; and the lack of access to adequate recreational, educational and vocational facilities. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of facilities for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of juvenile offenders. The Committee is concerned that even when a case against a juvenile has been dismissed by the prosecutor, the charge remains on the register because people are often not aware of how to have it struck off. This may result in stigmatization of innocent people.

62. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all measures to integrate fully into its legislation and practice the provisions of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 40 and 39, as well as other relevant international standards in this area, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines, the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty and the Vienna Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System. Facilities and programmes for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of juveniles should be developed. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others OHCHR, the Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice, and UNICEF through the Coordination Panel on Juvenile Justice.**

9. Dissemination of the reports

63. **Finally, the Committee recommends that in accordance with article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that consideration be given to the publication of the report along with the written answers to the list of issues raised by the Committee, the relevant summary records of the discussion and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee following its consideration of the report. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned NGOs.**